

Talking Points
Raytheon - Forest 2009 Supplier Conference
Tuesday, March 31, 2009
Jackson

- Mississippi has long history of proud service in defense-related industries.
- We welcome not only the strong employment these companies provide but also the contributions made by Mississippians to the causes of technology and defense.
- There once was a time when companies came to Mississippi seeking strong backs and cheap labor.
- Today, companies come for skilled labor, low taxes, great training and development programs, and a pro-business climate that remains among the best in the country, even in a down economy.
- In a down economy it would be easy to fold up the economic development tent, batten down the hatches and try to weather the storm.
- Our answer to the current international economic situation is to work harder so that when the storm is over, Mississippi will be poised to recover quickly.
- Job-creation is job one.
- Mississippi has been partners with Raytheon in Forest for the past quarter century.
- That partnership has grown stronger with each passing year.

- The recently completed expansion of the Consolidated Manufacturing center increased the site's footprint to 340,000 square feet.
- More importantly, it created about 100 new jobs, growing the local work force to about 750 people from the central Mississippi area.
- A 96,000 square foot facility officially opened in August 2007 and continues to support existing radar build and upgrade contracts, as well as newer contracts for air surveillance products delivered to domestic and international customers.
- The site provides services to other Raytheon operations and to military, industry and international customers. These include the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, various foreign governments, General Dynamics, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and Lockheed Martin.
- The workforce at Forest has strong technical capabilities and works in a lean production process.
- We all know the current state of the international economy.
- That's why it's important to thank our existing partners and to invite new partnerships.
- As you gather here for the 2009 supplier conference, be thinking about what Mississippi can do for you.